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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

SUBJECT Reception of Western Broadcasts; Underground Radio;
Critique of anti-Communist Propaganda Efforts;
Factors Affecting DefectionPLACE ACQUIRED
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[REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED] 1950 [REDACTED] the Voice of America (VOA) was the most popular radio program received in Czechoslovakia. Radio Free Europe (RFE), which was then in its infancy, ran a close second and was particularly effective for its denunciations of Communist informers. It was obvious to Czechoslovak audiences that many refugees contributed accurate information to RFE as soon as they reached a Western country. The British Broadcasting Company's (BBC) broadcasts to Czechoslovakia were the least popular at that time.

2. Jamming of Western broadcasts was nearly universal. For a short while after RFE commenced broadcasting, reception was relatively undisturbed, but jamming was soon extended to RFE broadcasts as well. Jamming was particularly strong in the early morning and in the evening, whereas Western broadcasts were received quite well from late morning to mid-afternoon, most likely because the size of the audience during those hours was presumed to be at a minimum.

[REDACTED] jamming had increased in

1951. [REDACTED]

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3. The people of Czechoslovakia had considerable experience with jamming during World War II. Thus, many of them had learned to install aerials which improved reception from distant stations. They took the Communist policy of interfering with Western broadcasts for granted. Their attitude could best be described by the phrase, "What can you expect from these people?"

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[REDACTED] Any person or group of persons found to be listeners to foreign broadcasts could be--and some were--described as enemies of the State and prosecuted on that basis. Nevertheless [REDACTED] 90 per cent of the radio receivers in Czechoslovakia were tuned in to some Western broadcasts. This figure includes bona fide Communists, whose motivation for listening was frequently different from that of the other listeners.

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4. Prior to World War II, many people in Czechoslovakia owned radio sets capable of receiving good signals from distant transmitters both on medium and short waves. Even now, the ownership of radio sets is not limited to any socio-economic group in Czechoslovakia. It has, however, become increasingly difficult to obtain spare parts for older sets, and the production of radio receivers has been restricted to medium wave types for a number of years. As jamming has been most effective in the medium wave band, it is therefore logical that the number of radios capable of receiving foreign broadcasts is in the process of being progressively reduced.

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5. [REDACTED] "White Legion" station which was said to broadcast in Slovakia.

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[REDACTED] this was a program of what, for lack of any exact data [REDACTED] call the Slovak Independence Movement. The White Legion station broadcast on short waves [REDACTED] Because of the danger of detection, it must be assumed that the transmitter was installed on a truck or other movable object and changed its position between broadcasts. Probably for fear of detection, broadcasts were infrequent and highly irregular in terms of time and duration, but limited to evening hours [REDACTED]

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6. [REDACTED]

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